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# FOOD ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET

## MAURITANIA

Updated July 26, 2018

### SITUATION

- Mauritania, a predominantly desert country of 4 million people, faces high levels of poverty and hunger. The World Bank reports that nearly a third of Mauritians live under the national poverty line. In addition, a mid-2017 national nutrition survey found that acute malnutrition affected approximately 11 percent of children younger than 5 years of age, representing a serious situation per UN World Health Organization guidelines.
- Many Mauritians depend on subsistence agriculture and pastoralism as their primary livelihoods, and these activities are susceptible to environmental shocks. Insufficient and irregular rainfall in 2017 and early 2018 has significantly disrupted crop and livestock production in Mauritania, limiting vulnerable households' access to food and income. Prices of cereals and imported commodities are also unusually elevated, further undermining food security, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) reports. FEWS NET projects that parts of southern Mauritania will face Crisis (IPC 3) levels of acute food insecurity through September, while much of the rest of the country will face Stressed (IPC 2) levels of acute food insecurity during the same period.\* Between October and January, FEWS NET expects that food security conditions in many affected areas will improve as pasture regenerates and farmers collect the main September-to-November harvest. However, Stressed- and Crisis-level acute food insecurity will persist through January in some zones.
- Thousands of people fled to Mauritania after the 2012 coup and civil unrest in Mali, and persistent conflict in Mali continues to drive new population movements into Mauritania. As of June, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees reported that Mauritania hosted nearly 56,500 Malian refugees, who largely rely on food assistance to meet their basic needs.



\* The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a standardized tool that aims to classify the severity and magnitude of acute food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries, ranges from Minimal (IPC 1) to Famine (IPC 5).

### RESPONSE

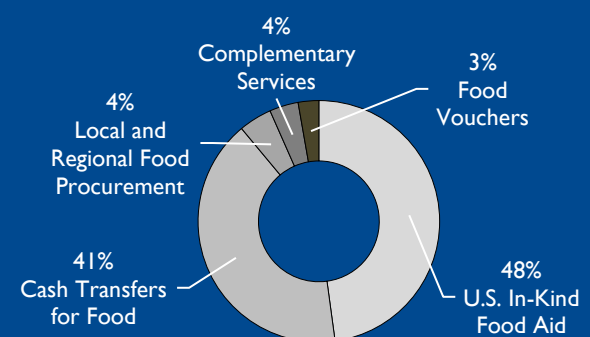
- In collaboration with the UN World Food Program (WFP), USAID's Office of Food for Peace (FFP) provides household food rations and cash transfers for food to Malians living in Mbera refugee camp in southeast Mauritania. FFP also supports WFP to distribute specialized nutrition assistance to prevent and treat acute malnutrition among refugee children and pregnant and lactating women. In addition, FFP enables the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) to distribute ready-to-use therapeutic food countrywide to more than 8,500 children younger than 5 years of age suffering from severe acute malnutrition.
- To respond to acute needs driven by drought conditions in southwestern Mauritania, FFP works with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) Save the Children and Action Against Hunger to provide cash transfers and food vouchers to an estimated 27,000 highly vulnerable people. The NGOs also carry out nutrition and agriculture interventions that help families meet nutritional requirements and strengthen their livelihoods.

### FOOD FOR PEACE CONTRIBUTIONS

#### Total Contributions per Fiscal Year

	<i>U.S. Dollars</i>	<i>Metric Tons*</i>
FY 2018	\$7.8 million	2,525 MT
FY 2017	\$6.4 million	2,090 MT
FY 2016	\$5.8 million	2,220 MT

#### FY 2017-18 by Types of Aid



\*Metric tonnage does not reflect funding for vouchers or cash transfers.